The OECD and progress

Posted on 6 September 2011

This post provides you with some information on what the OECD - one of the major players in the field of measuring societal progress, is currently doing.

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) has been one of the main international drivers for the growing interest in measuring societal progress beyond narrow economic measures such as GDP. It's an organisation aimed at identifying good practice in, coordinating domestic and international policy, and stimulating economic progress and world trade. It has 34 member countries.

The OECD has several key initiatives in measuring societal progress. **For more click** here

Return to Home

Comments

#1 Justin Turner
19/09/2011 10:27:45 PM The OECD and progress

One of the things about the ABS data is the enormous breadth and depth of it. However, it's also be nice if the ABS published analysis on particular topics, essentially bringing together data and presenting political questions for the public to think about.

Given the short attention span of the media, this might mean the analysis would be both deep and comprehensive, but only on a single topic at any given time. This would have the potential to focus Australian political debate on a single issue.

It seems to me that producing a scorecard of 'progress indicators' would only be a starting point. Analysis would mean trying to delve into key issues that drive the numbers in a tangible way, or issues that drive multiple metrics, or issues that involve a tradeoff and require a political decision. Especially with tradeoffs, if the debate focused on the tradeoff, it might provide politicians and public servants with a clear message as to how the preferences of the public lean.

Kind regards,

JT

#2 Serhat (MAP team)
21/09/2011 10:53:17 AM The OECD and progress

Hi Justin. Thanks for the comment. You raise some interesting points especially the idea of a scorecard and the need to focus on trade-offs. Trade-offs is something that will be disccussed at the later stages of our consultation. It is a very importnat topic as progress in one area could mean regress in another, so we need to be aware of the relationships and trade-offs between different goals and aspirations.

You also mentioned that you'd like the ABS to produce some more analysis. The ABS does produce analysis on topics of interest and concern. The sister product of MAP is Australian Social Trends. It provides analysis and commentary on a wide range of social issues and it is released quarterly. The latest issue came out today. Apart from Australian Social Trends, the ABS also produces other analysis. They are usually attached to statistical product releases, sometimes referred to as feature articles. You can find more articles here

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The OECD and progress
Name:

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September 2011 (91)
August 2011 (6)
July 2011 (1)
April 2011 (3)

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